

## Spank Rock – “YoYoYoYoYo”

Despite the incredible creativity of hip hop, its ability to throw up new styles, to morph and reinvent itself, it's not every day that something genuinely fresh drops in front of you. Welcome, then, to “YoYoYoYoYo,” the debut album from Spank Rock. Drawing on the music of their hometown, Baltimore, Spank Rock make something genuinely unlike any record you've heard before. Of course there are antecedents, but “YoYoYoYoYo” demands to be approached on its own terms.

Opening with white label smash “Backyard Betty” (the story of an “ass-shaking competition champ”), producer XXXchange lays out his stall early with ear-pummelling bass hits, a beat assembled from percussion garbage and a sinuous, catchy little melody seemingly played on a calculator. Over it Naeem Juwan aka MC Spank Rock lays out the funny, stinky little story of Betty and her many suitors in an instantly likeable, nasal drawl that has drawn comparisons with Q-Tip (only with more sex rhymes). This, though, is just the start. “What It Look Like” is built around random violin plucking and fabulous boasting (“My tongue is a drum/My mind's a machine”). “IMC” ups the pace and the lyrical complexity on the album's most experimental piece, complete with drum programming that sounds like Mo Tucker playing bloco beats on kettle drums made from mountains and ending with the battle cry, “Your sound is dead”. “Rick Rubin,” a tribute/boast track takes the bearded zenmeister as its inspiration and turns into a dirty, catchy robot-latino number that's as addictive as weird sex. “Touch Me” is cavernous abstract eroto-rhyming, “Bump” early eighties frat house booty music reconfigured as an epic No Wave stomper (it also features the foul-mouthed contribution of Philly rapstress Amanda Blank). “Sweet Talk” is the rawest, dirtiest funk tune you've heard since James Brown was in his classic period, resolving into a sweet lofi soul moment, a truly breathtaking, brutal and beautiful musical moment, featuring sopmetime backing singers the Typical Girls. “Chilly Will” builds slowly into a pure Club cut-up that's as clever and catchy as it is offbeat, a theme taken to yet another level on “Top Billin' From Far Left”. “Coke & Wet” slows things down onto a string-laden, more traditional hip hop beat over which MC Spank Rock once again shows just what a fine MC he is, mixing “college” and “gangsta” genres with ease and dissing “hemp hacky-sacking motherfuckers” with the easy assurance born of pure star quality. “Competition” takes the album towards its end on a darker note, a battle rap of immediate power over swooping cello, electronic pulses and disembodied offbeat guitar chops, which MC Spank Rock himself describes as “a triumphant warrior song”. “Screwville USA” acts as an extended outro, Juwan's tenor slowed down into a baritone, the strings and flutes giving you a final chance to draw breath and take in what you've just listened to.

At just under forty two minutes long, Spank Rock have managed to reconfigure the musical landscape around them by being funny, catchy, clever, fearless and most of all, innovative. We firmly believe that this is a debut album that will be talked about and loved for years to come. Catch on now...



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